

# The New King in Egypt and Cleopatra's Throne



The royal palace at Cairo, where King Fuad holds his court. It was here that he was inaugurated King of Egypt March 18. The troops assembled are waiting to accompany him upon one of his visits through the city.

## Most Historic Throne in the World Again Rules the "Upper and Lower Nile" and Legend Says Ptolemies Are Again Restored

IF the spirit of Cleopatra walks abroad in her beloved Egypt the Imperial Shade must have harbored strange reveries during the recent Thursday morning when Ahmed Fuad I. was being proclaimed by his Ministers King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Protector of the Faithful and all other things that constitute Mohammedan royalty.

Since she applied the asp to her bosom on the twenty-ninth of August, thirty years before Christ, Egypt had not had a king. There had been rulers who claimed royalty, and Governors and Sultans and Khedives, but through all succeeding dynasties Egypt remained a province or a suzerainty, ever paying tribute to some overlord nation. The romantic legends of Cleopatra depict her as being absorbed in her ceaseless efforts to keep Egypt free and independent, to keep her throne secure and untrammelled. Those who criticize her for her affairs with Mark Antony, Caesar and Octavia consistently do her the honor of declaring that she was "Egypt" first and a romantic adventurer second.

It has perhaps gratified the Imperial Shade—if Cleopatra's spirit does still frequent the shores of the Nile—to watch the failures of first one generation of rulers after another to maintain the throne. Or perhaps the triumph of Fuad will relieve her of anxieties.

Cleopatra was the last of the Ptolemies. Fuad is a direct descendant, by an unbroken line, of the Fatimite Caliphs, who were the most powerful of the successors of the Ptolemies. He is the ninth ruler of the Mohammed Ali dynasty, founded in 1805, and is directly descendant from the first of the Mohammed Ali line, the powerful and treacherous Ali Bey, who became the ruler of Egypt in 1750 by murdering his master, Ibrahim, who had intrusted him with great military power.

There is a tradition that this Ali Bey, who, despite his treacherous habits was a wise and competent ruler, was really a Ptolemy. This legend still thrives and has had an important part in keeping in power for more than a century the house of Mohammed Ali, recognized as descendants of Ali Bey.

Egypt is a land of legends and to explain or account for one always there is another to be quoted. In their reasonings that Ali Bey was a Ptolemy and that, therefore, the new King is of this line, which historians

declare to be extinct, the legend believing Egyptians recall that Cleopatra had three children by Mark Antony, as well as a son, Caesarion, by Julius Caesar. Octavia put the latter to death, and of the three two are accounted for but, strangely enough, one of Cleopatra's sons was lost in the history of the events of her time and there is no record of his death, which is unanimously accepted.

Any such mystery as this is quite enough in Egypt to inspire a legend which, sent its way by one generation, is nursed and speeded along by all generations that follow. Ali Bey was not opposed to the spread of the news that he was the living answer to the mystery of disappearance of this son of Cleopatra. It did not concern him greatly that his own priests were somewhat responsible for the rapid acceptance of this belief. It brought him more loyalty when he sorely needed it than could any other device.

It is possible of course that the cynical historian does great injustice to Ali Bey when he scouts the legend of his possessing the blood of the last Ptolemaic king. Many less unbelievable legends have found their way in accepted history. It is even interesting to think that perhaps King Fuad I. Being a remote grandson of Mohammed Ali, who also was a remote grandson of Ali Bey, represents the royal line whose magnificence was interrupted by the failure of Cleopatra's ambitious plans to be chaste-laine of an Egypt that should be solely her own.

There is room for much curiosity as to what Fuad will do with a royal Egypt now that he has it. In no other country have the heads of rulers undergone such frequent decapitations. Ten years have made a long life for Sultan or Khedive. The

Oriental beginnings of its present peoples, who mostly are descendants of the Mamelukes, do not promote gentleness in dealing with rulers, nor does the Mameluke disposition urge satisfaction with any power that obtains.

The record of all dynasties is punctuated with strange successions—grandfathers succeeding grandsons and uncles succeeding nephews. And abdications usually have been tragic. The former Khedive, who was deposed by the British in 1914 and who now lives happily idle and prosperous in Switzerland, is peculiarly fortunate. He managed to get out of his Egypt just in time after being deposed.

In many respects the court of the new King is one of the most curious of all royal institutions. It is Mohammedan in its foundations, European in its outward guise. There is a Prime Minister instead of a Grand Vizier, and there is a court of etiquette which permits the ladies of Egypt to meet with their husbands at afternoon coffee in the King's reception rooms.

But far within the palace, set apart by beautiful and exotic gardens in which little pools and fountains glisten, there is a haremlik—and all the appurtenances to the well constituted harem.

But there is but one Queen—she was the Princess Nazli, a member of his own house.

whom Fuad married in 1919. In the Ptolemy dynasties the ruler usually married his sister; the Ptolemaic queens were expected to marry younger brothers and share with them the throne. The custom did not entirely disappear with the Ptolemies, and many later rulers—who ruled with the consent of more powerful neighbors or who were merely appointed governors—made similar marriages.

It was not remarkable then that Fuad should have chosen the Princess Nazli. Nor is it remarkable that the harem which he had maintained for many years in his own palace should not have been moved to the Sultan's palace when he was chosen by the British to succeed his nephew, Abbas Hilmi, who was thought to be an unsafe guardian of the Suez Canal during the war.

Nazli has been set apart as the Queen, however. To all outward appearances at least she is the only acknowledged wife of the new ruler. She already has formed a court of her own and has established rules of etiquette patterned after those of the British court. She holds a levee every afternoon, to which all the members of the principal Egyptian families are welcomed.

The Queen has indorsed the most startling of the war's innovations in Cairo—the audacious going abroad unveiled of the



His Majesty Ahmed Fuad, Egypt's first King since the time of Cleopatra.



She might have been a Queen of Egypt. Senorita Carmen Barrera of Seville, in whom, it is said, King Fuad was very much interested while he was still a Prince.

high born Egyptian women. Before the war few women of station ever were seen on the streets of Cairo. When they did appear they were safely hedged in by slaves and servants, and fully protected from public curiosity. Under the new King and Queen they may safely move about the streets, their veils discarded. The Queen herself has set the fashion.

But of the other feminine members of the royal household—those mysterious forms that flit back and forth beneath the palms in the well guarded haremlik—they are hidden behind true Egyptian reticence. They have not been seen at the Queen's receptions nor passing in or out the front gates of the beautiful palace yard.

Even the royal palace itself is a curiosity. Egypt never has been a prosperous nation since the days of Beys, yet the palace of the later Sultans, now become the palace of the King, is one of the most spacious and magnificent royal residences in the world. Set back in a great courtyard it is entirely surrounded by a great iron fence, which is patrolled constantly, day and night, by the Sultan's—now the King's—guard, a battalion of 8,000 men.

Behind the rather sedate and solid marble front there are great halls and corridors that lose themselves in conservatories, palm gardens and detached groups of separate buildings. One of these groups, marble palaces in themselves, composes the harem quarters, where at least one of the later Sultans of the line, Ismail, a grandson of Mohammed Ali, maintained a company of wives that in number rivaled the household of his overlord at Constantinople.

This group of buildings comprises a separate building for each of the four wives Ismail kept about him. Each building is large enough for a complete retinue of slaves and other attendants.

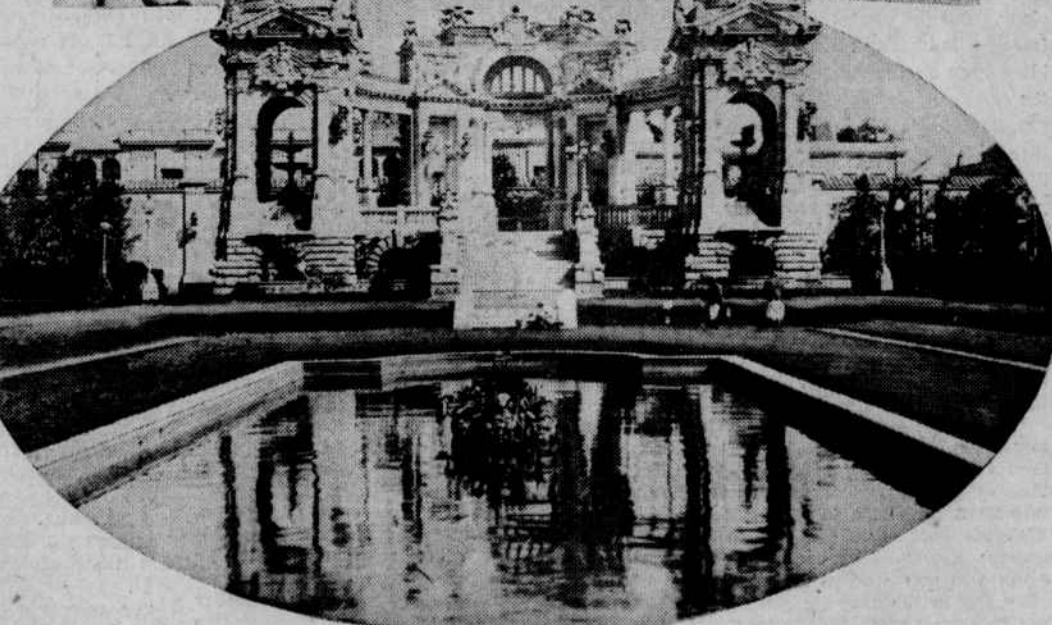
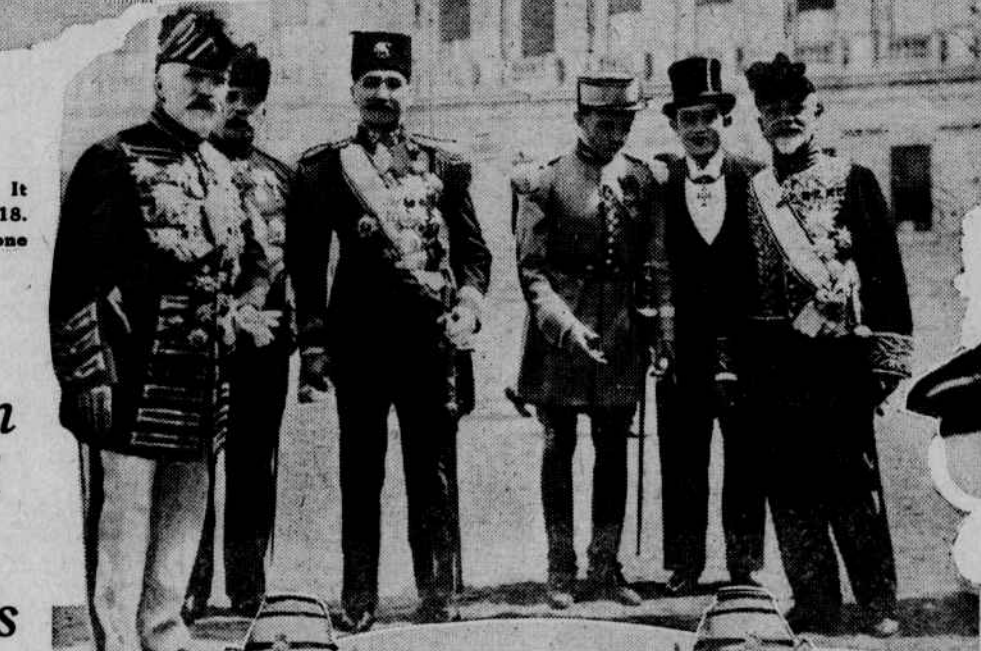
It was rumored before Fuad's accession, to the Sultanate that he had paid ardent

court to a beautiful Spanish girl belonging to one of the most distinguished families of Seville. This young woman was the Senorita Carmen Barrera. Fuad, a frequent visitor to Europe, much preferred Spain to France and, unlike other Continental princes, seemed to find few relaxations in Paris that were not more pleasantly offered him in Madrid. It was in Madrid he met the senorita and, it was said, fell in love with her.

His insistence finally persuaded her parents to accept his hospitality in Cairo, where he occupied one of the smaller palaces belonging to the Sultanate. Fuad was an authority upon the early history and the archaeological souvenirs of old Egypt, and was an entertaining host.

What he may have promised in the way of resigning his Mohammedan rights to divided households is not, of course, known. It seems to be certain, however, that he was an ardent wooer and that there was a space of time when it was not definitely understood whether or not the senorita's parents would refuse to permit their daughter to become a Princess of Egypt.

But there must have been a refusal in the end. The senorita and her family returned to Seville. Fuad followed, but returned alone.



Above—The Spanish, French, Italian, British and Persian diplomatic representatives to the new Kingdom of Egypt photographed in front of the palace just after they had made their first ceremonial call on the new monarch. Below, just a glimpse at the palace gardens.